

Furthermore, I would submit that there is possibly a difference in Baltimore City. I do not know specifically how they carry on elections in Baltimore City. I am told that it is different.

Certainly, conditions there appear to be different. Whether this is because Baltimore City people are more sophisticated, whether they are more advanced in their politics, I do not know, but it is possible they can have a yearly election in Baltimore City.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have one-quarter minute, Delegate Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: Speaking for ourselves, other parts of the State, I can find no advocacy for the off-year elections and I would urge that we do not adopt them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Schloeder.

DELEGATE SCHLOEDER: Mr. Chairman, at this time the Committee yields three minutes to Delegate Needle.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Needle.

DELEGATE NEEDLE: Mr. Chairman, as a member of the Local Government Committee, I have been committed while here in Annapolis to the proposition of creating more viable and visible local governments.

I call your attention to the overwhelming support that you gave the Committee Recommendation LG-1, which passed through this body with unprecedented speed.

That indicates your strong feeling about the creation of more viable county governments. I submit that the majority recommendation of the Suffrage and Elections Committee creating separate elections for county governments is a concomitant to LG-1 and a very essential element for you to pass in order to create those more viable county governments.

Point three, on page three and point five on page four of the Minority Report S & E-2(A) on this subject matter points out that the people just do not seem to be very interested in local issues and local candidates. How do they propose that we solve the problem which is created by virtue of county officials and issues being discussed and voted upon at the same time state issues are — which is the present system. They want us to retain the present system. How in the world does that solve the problem?

I submit that that is the best argument for change. To have separate county elections is the way to focus attention and to place the spotlight on county issues and county candidates. We all know it is difficult to get information now on local candidates and local issues under the present system because the mass media naturally give the bulk of their attention to federal issues and candidates and state issues and candidates. Why relegate the local issues and candidates to an inferior position by making them run along with state officials?

Separate elections for the county is very likely to increase voter participation at each level, especially the local level, as is indicated by the Baltimore City experience. Baltimore City apparently feels very strongly that they should retain their present system of having their separate elections without being encumbered by electing officials at any other level of government at the same time. The minority wants to make a special exception for Baltimore City. What is good for Baltimore City, and it has proved good for Baltimore City, should certainly be good for the local county governments as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have one-quarter minute, Delegate Needle.

DELEGATE NEEDLE: We should not make a special exception for the government of Baltimore City. The local government article said Baltimore City from now on would be considered a county. Therefore, all counties should have their elections at the same time as Baltimore City in a separate year.

I strongly urge you to support the Majority Report and defeat this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Byrnes.

DELEGATE BYRNES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield three minutes to Delegate Cardin.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Cardin.

DELEGATE CARDIN: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates: I will not speak to the merits of the exception in the minority amendment. I would prefer to speak to the merits of the frequency of elections as we recommended which is only every two years.

The testimony that was brought before us and witnesses who spoke to us were almost unanimous in stating that the less frequent the election, the greater the turnout at the election. The Maryland Associa-